

HURRICANE AWARENESS PLAN

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CHARLESTON DISTRICT HURRICANE AWARENESS PLAN

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this plan is to educate and provide employees with guidance to enable them to be better prepared in the event a hurricane strikes.

2. **APPLICABILITY:** This plan is applicable to all employees of the Charleston District.

3. **REFERENCES:**

- a. ER 500-1-1, Natural Disaster Procedures
- b. CESAC 500-1-1, Natural Disaster Procedures
- c. CESAC SOP for Emergency Operations Center and Emergency Area Office
- d. ER 690-1-321, Civilian Personnel Staffing for Emergencies

4. **ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSAL GUIDANCE:** County Emergency Management officials will provide information regarding evacuation. They have established shelters within the local coastal counties for individuals to use when a county does not require total evacuation. When an entire county must be evacuated, host counties have been designated to receive these individuals. Employees should follow the directions of county Emergency Management officials.

a. The Commander will authorize group dismissals or closures only when conditions are severe or where normal agency operations are significantly interrupted. Employees should not assume that excused absences will be granted in all situations, since a liberal annual leave policy may be more appropriate in some instances.

b. If hazardous weather conditions or other emergency situations which affect the opening of the district office develop during non-working hours, employees in the Charleston area should listen to one of the following radio stations or one of the following television channels for instructions on reporting to work. Other media may also make announcements.

LOCAL RADIO STATIONS

WBUB 107.5 FM
WEZL 103.5 FM
WSSX 95.1 FM
WYBB 98.0 FM
WTMA 1250 AM

LOCAL TV CHANNELS

WCBD-TV CH 2
WCIV-TV CH 4
WCSC-TV CH 5

WUJM 1450 AM

c. Unless otherwise notified, all employees are expected to report to work as usual. Any required dismissal during normal working hours will be announced through supervisory channels.

d. Immediately following any natural disaster, all employees must contact their supervisors for information and guidance, provide their status, and reflect how they can be contacted. If unable to reach the supervisor, employees will attempt to reach the next supervisor level, up to division/office chief.

5. EXPLANATION OF TERMS: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) transmits early storm communiques called weather bulletins. The National Hurricane Center (NHC) located in Coral Gables, Florida, along with the National Weather Service (NWS) Branch offices, gather all Atlantic tropical weather disturbance data. Some terms to know:

a. **Advisory.** A method for disseminating storm and hurricane data to the public every 6 hours.

b. **Intermediate Advisory.** A method of updating regular advisory information every 2 to 3 hours as necessary.

c. **Special Advisory.** Warning given any time there is a significant change in weather conditions or change in warnings.

d. **Small Craft Advisory.** Sustained (exceeding 2 hours) weather and/or sea conditions either present or forecast that are potentially hazardous to small boats. Hazardous conditions may include winds of 20 to 38 MPH (18 to 33 knots) and/or dangerous wave conditions.

e. **Tropical Disturbance.** A moving area of thunderstorms in the tropics.

f. **Tropical Depression.** An area of low pressure with a counterclockwise circulation of clouds and winds up to 38 MPH.

g. **Tropical Storm.** Counterclockwise circulation of clouds and winds from 39 to 73 MPH.

h. **Hurricane.** Counterclockwise circulation of clouds and winds 74 MPH or greater.

i. **Hurricane Watch.** There is a probability of a hurricane striking the area.

j. **Hurricane Warning.** A hurricane is expected to strike the area within 24 hours.

k. **Storm Surge.** An abnormal rise of the sea along a shore primarily the result of storm winds.

l. **Tornado Watch.** Tornadoes and severe thunderstorms are possible in the area.

m. **Tornado Warning.** Tornado detected in the area. **Take shelter immediately.**

6. HURRICANE INFORMATION SOURCES: Local governments and the county Emergency Management Director or designated alternate are responsible for maintaining the emergency communication and warning systems. The Emergency Operation Control Group is comprised of local response decisions. The county officials work with the Emergency Management Director to provide uniform public information. The Emergency Management Director is, however, the chief spokesperson during a hurricane and will oversee the release of all emergency public information. Radio and television stations will provide initial releases of information and notification to allow early evacuation if necessary. A list of Emergency Broadcast Stations (EBS's) follows. If any of these stations cannot be received, contact the county Emergency Management Office and obtain information regarding the nearest Emergency Broadcast Station (EBS).

EBS	Location
WNEX-FM	Aiken
WQLO-FM	Beaufort
WXTC-FM	Charleston
WCOS-FM	Columbia
WSTN-FM	Florence
WGMB-FM	Georgetown
WFBC-FM	Greenville
WGXL-FM	Laurens
WATP-FM	Marion
WKZQ-FM	Myrtle Beach
WPJS-FM	Orangeburg
WSPA-FM	Spartanburg
WWDM-FM	Sumter

7. HURRICANE CATEGORIES: All hurricanes are dangerous, but some are more so than others. The way storm surge, wind, and other factors combine determines the hurricane's destructive power. The National Weather Service categorizes hurricanes by intensity on the Saffir/Simpson Hurricane Scale which indicates the relative strength of a hurricane. Category 1 is a minimum

hurricane; category 5 is a maximum hurricane. The criteria for each category is shown below. This can be used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected along the coast with a hurricane.

Saffir/Simpson Hurricane Scale

Cat	Central Pressure		Winds MPH	Surge Tides (ft)
	Millibars	Inches of Mercury		
1	980+	28.94+	74-95	4-5
2	965-979	28.50-28.93	96-110	6-8
3	945-964	27.91-28.48	111-130	9-12
4	920-944	27.17-27.90	131-155	13-18
5	less 920	less 27.17	155+	18+

Category

1. **Winds 74-95 mph:** No substantial structural damage to buildings. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Also, some coastal road flooding and minor pier damage.
2. **Winds 96-110 mph:** Some roofing material, door, and window damage to buildings. Considerable damage to vegetation, mobile homes and piers. Coastal and low-lying escape routes flood 2-4 hours before arrival of center. Small craft in unprotected anchorages break moorings.
3. **Winds 111-130 mph:** Some structural damage to buildings and a potential for external wall failure. Significant roof damage. Mobile homes are destroyed. Tidal surges up to 12 feet in coastal areas. Inland flooding of low lying areas up to 8 miles inland and flooding of lands adjacent to streams and rivers. Significant damage to trees and other vegetation.
4. **Winds 131-155 mph:** More extensive roof damage and structural failures. Major erosion of beach areas. Tidal surges up to 18 feet in coastal areas and significant inland flooding of low lying areas.
5. **Winds greater than 155 mph:** Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings. Some complete building failure. Major damage to lower floors of all coastal structures.

Tidal surges in excess of 18 feet and extensive damage to forest areas.